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## Chapter 1

### Introduction: Taking Mediterranean Tourists Seriously

*Pau Obrador-Pons, Mike Crang and Penny Travlou*

This book is about the emerging cultures of mass tourism. While the rise of mass tourism has been the subject of much attention, the focus has tended to be on the impact it has upon local peoples, local economies or local environments as well as on economic and managerial issues. This book instead wants to take the culture of mass tourism seriously, knowing that even putting it so sounds like an oxymoron to many. With more than 230 million international tourists a year, the Mediterranean is the largest tourist destination region in the world. To follow Löfgren (1999) the Mediterranean is now less united by Braudel's rhythms of olive, grain and wine cultivation, shared trade and roman legacies than the fortnightly pulse of the package tour, the circulation of resort types and the shared culture of sun-seeking tourism. This book sets out to demonstrate that the economic importance of mass tourism in the Mediterranean is matched by its significance as cultural and aesthetic phenomena. As well as transforming the derelict economies of the Mediterranean, mass tourism is one of the most sensational cultural phenomena of our times and is a central feature of the contemporary everyday in Western Europe (Rojek 1993, Inglis 2000, Franklin and Crang 2001). It can no longer be considered as a discrete activity, contained in special locations and times, but paraphrasing Franklin it 'has become a metaphor for the way we lead our everyday lives in a consumer society' (2003: 5). Mass tourism has developed into a new cultural formation that mixes global, national and local influences. Most of the elements of this cultural formation, which have yet to be addressed, destabilizes a fixed and coherent identity of places. Mass Mediterranean tourism is rather creating a new space of related and refracted practices through reciprocally entwined, though not equal, cultures of work and tourism. It is these new practices and spaces that this collection brings together.

Mass Mediterranean tourism is a historically specific phenomenon that is generally associated with three different elements. First and foremost, it is associated with the democratization of leisure, the extension of tourism to all sectors of society. It is in this respect a 'quantitative notion' that refers to the 'proportion of the population participating in tourism or on the volume of tourist activity' (Bramwell 2004: 7). Secondly mass tourism is also associated with a particular mode of tourism production that emphasizes economies of scale. Mass tourism involves the industrialization of leisure, the translation of Fordist principles of accumulation to tourism, including the large replication of standardized products, the reduction of cost and the promotion of mass consumption and the spatial and temporal concentrations. Cheap package holidays are the most visible manifestation of this mode of production, which is currently being replaced by more sophisticated versions combining economies of scope with economies of scale. Finally, mass tourism is associated with a particular tourist sensibility that emphasizes warm climate, coastal pleasures, freedom from regulated world, relax and a party atmosphere. Often defined in opposition to classical ideas of travel as sightseeing, mass tourism represents a different tourist experience that summarizes with the three s sun, sea and sand (and also sex and spirits).

These three elements come together for the first time in late nineteenth century in the coastal towns of Britain, notably Blackpool (Bennett 1983, Walton 2000). After the Second World War mass tourism internationalizes establishing the Mediterranean as its main destination and its most remarkable manifestation. A number of factors made possible the emergence of mass tourism including innovations in transport, the consolidation of a welfare system, the increase in real income, the reorganization and rationalization of time and the improvement of international relations. Over the past 20 years or so mass tourism has embarked on a process of restructuration still ongoing that has profoundly reshaped the neat picture that emerged in the 1950s and 1960s (Bramwell, 2003, Aguiló 2005). The introduction of more flexible forms of accumulation in tourism has lead to the expansion of mass tourism beyond the beach, with a diversification of tourist experience though the industrialization of leisure as well as climatic and hedonistic pleasures remain a common denominator

in the majority of tourism Mediterranean. In this context it would be a mistake to reduce mass tourism to beach tourism and indeed to ignore its relationship with everyday life in Northern Europe.

Mass tourist sites are some of the most iconic examples of western consumer societies; and yet the study of tourism is still dominated by policy led work, with a productivist bias that emphasizes the topics and values linked to processes of production. Issues related with the organization of tourist provision and its impact has systematically received priority over issues related with touristic consumption. Even when consumption is addressed it tends to be through the production of marketing materials, and the creation of landscapes for consumption, turning mass tourism into ‘a logical extension of the general principle of industrial capitalism to the realm of leisure’ (Böröcz in Koshar 1998: 325). The majority of literature on mass tourism and beach resort tourism, including the works of Bramwell (2004), Apostolopoulos et al (2000) and Montanari and Williams (1995), adopts an economical and managerial perspective on resort development, growth and increasingly sustainability. Some of this works make reference to culture change, focusing mainly on the impacts of mass tourism on the host community. However studies of the culture of tourists are relatively uncommon and those of the culture of mass tourism even rarer. Simply taking the holdings of one of the editor’s university catalogues, less than 10% of the more than 200 volumes on tourism were significantly focused around the tourists themselves, their experiences and what they made of them. And of those, most were then picking out specific interesting niches of cultural tourists (such as backpackers or spiritual tourists). This seems to reflect the origins of much of the interesting work on cultures of tourism through anthropology. There the tradition of the study of isolated local community has often set up an uneasy relationship with tourism and tourists, where their presence is seen as a threat to local identity (and the credential of professional travellers and scholars) (Crick 1992, Risse 1998, Galani-Moutafi 2000, Crang 2009). The effect has been that cultural studies of tourism are freighted with problematic legacies of scholarship that saw ‘host’ communities as static small scale recipients of industrially produced flows of people. Local cultures are seen as eroded by a homogenous inauthentic, consumer culture.

The study of mass tourism is shaped through a series of striking paradoxes. For sure, mass tourism does promise pure entertainment and often flirts with the banal; and yet the conceptualization of tourism still relies on outdated notions of authenticity that establish social distinctions between good and bad tourism. Much critical academic work focuses upon breaking down those promises to reveal the often unpalatable social realities involved in their production. Inglis (2000: 5) notes ‘The dreams are powerful and beautiful’ and we should be careful of dismissing them and their role in people’s lives, even if ‘dedicated dreambusters in their big boots will, correctly, point out the horrors and boredom of actually existing tightly packaged trips, the mutual exploitation of tourist and native’. Mass tourism is thin on meaning and ideological narratives and very dense on physicality and sensuality; and yet scholars with an interest in cultures of tourism have chosen overwhelmingly to examine discourses, meaning and ideological structures at the cost of physicality. With the emergence of mass tourism, the Mediterranean has been re-integrated within a global set of cultural, social and economic networks; however the Mediterranean is still conceptualized as a bounded region that is subject of external forces producing impacts, a region that needs to be preserved from foreign invaders. This book responds to our discomfort with these shortcomings. Dominant perspectives on tourism have failed to provide an adequate basis for exploring the cultural dimension of mass tourism.

Despite its enormous significance mass tourism rarely makes an appearance in contemporary social sciences, which tends to marginalize this tourist phenomenon. With few exceptions, most notably Urry (1990) and Bauman (2000), tourism is a stranger to current theorizations on consumption, globalization, identity formation and the consolidation of new modes of bio political regulation. If used as an example, it is often of a shallow identity or subjectivity. In recent years there have appeared several high profile collections and volumes reflecting a surge in interest in cultures of tourism and their significance. The most significant of these are Urry and Sheller *Tourism Mobilities* (2004), Desmond’s (1999) work on *Staging Tourism*, the histories of vacationing by Löfgren (1999) and Inglis (2000), the collections by Crouch on *Leisure and Tourism Geographies* (1999), by Baerenholdt *et al.* on ‘Performing Tourist Places’ (2004) and by Minca and Oakes on the paradoxical desires and outcomes of tourism (2006). All these works interrogate the practices and cultures of

tourism as this volume do, but the beach and mass tourism form only a fairly limited aspect of the whole. Most of the works on cultures and practices of tourist still focuses on specialist forms of usually high status tourism, such as ecotourism, literary and heritage and adventure tourism. There are, nevertheless several great works looking at ‘living with’ or ‘coping with’ mass tourism in the Mediterranean (Boissevain 1996, Waldren 1996, Abram et al 1997) and tourist representations (Selwyn 1996). There are also some interesting examples of work devoted to the sun and sand tourism and cultures of the beach (Lenček and Bosker 1998, Urbain 2003), the lure of the sea (Corbin 1994) and sunlight (Carter, 2007). Despite all these valuable contributions, the prevailing view is still that exemplified in the classic work of Turner and Ash (1975) which vilifies mass tourism as uncultured, uncaring and alienating. They describe mass tourists as ‘the barbarians of the age of leisure, the holden hordes’ and the Mediterranean as ‘a pleasure periphery’ (1975:1). Confronted with the all too apparent constrictions and obvious exploitations of mass tourism, tourist studies generally downplays the banal, the un-exotic and, in particular, the pleasurable character of the tourist experience, reproducing the binary opposition between travel and tourism. It is these moments of actual existing pleasure that this work seeks to recover and to which it gives serious attention, balancing the horrors and boredom with the dreams and hopes, the exploitations with the liberties (Inglis 2000: 5). ‘It is important,’ Löfgren reminds us, ‘to see that standardized marketing does not have to standardize tourists. Studies of staging of tourist experience in mass tourism often reduce or overlook the uniqueness of all personal travel experience’ (1999: 8). The lack of attention to the cultures of mass tourism, especially the dreamings and doings of mass tourists, is a major shortcoming in tourist studies. Dominant frameworks – heavily dependent on romantic ideas of travel – dismiss at the best of times the liveliness and creativity of mass tourism. More often than not they fail to unpack the phenomenon at all.

This edited collection contributes to the study of mass tourism with a series of ethnographical insights into some of the key sites of this tourist phenomenon, including the villa, the beach, the island and coastal hotel. In so doing, we want to extend the surge of interest in cultures and practices of tourism beyond specialist products, bringing to light a major component of contemporary consumer

culture in Western Europe. The prime focus of this book is on the mundane and banal aspects of mass tourism. We argue for attentiveness to the diversity of practices in mass tourism and look at theorizing it as a way of being in the world, as materially constituted and constituting a social world, being alongside other people and a way of relating to places. The book has an unequivocal empirical orientation with all chapters reporting from recent and ongoing field research in the Mediterranean. However underlying the book there is also a deep rooted theoretical concern with developing new perspectives on mass tourism, new ways of looking at and thinking of this tourist phenomenon that break with the shortcomings of dominant perspectives. Equally we believe it is important to break with the tendency to isolate this tourist phenomenon from the main debates in the Social Sciences. The field of mass tourism has an enormous potential to be a fertile ground for developing social theory, in particular that relating to contemporary consumer culture. In this introductory chapter we summarize some of the theoretical concerns underpinning this book. We identify three broad areas of inquiry relating with banality and biopolitics, the spatial and temporal dimension of mass tourism and its enactment. It is not our intention to set out a canonical perspective on mass tourism, but to identify some emerging research agendas. Our intention is to contribute to the renewal of a field in desperate need of fresh ideas.

### **Banality and biopolitics on the beach**

Rather than adopting an economic or managerial perspective, this book sets out to demonstrate the cultural significance of mass tourism and the significance of mass tourism to mass culture. Such an approach encounters its most serious challenge in the perceived banality of mass tourism. We are confronted with a tourist phenomenon that draw in gritty vulgarity, playful crowds, a culture of indulgence, a series of corporeal pleasures and the blend of the ancient with the ironic and the kitsch among other things. Mass tourism offers a distinctive form of entertainment – more ‘vulgar’ and ‘corporeal’- that clashes with the sophistication and detachment of middle class forms of travel, the values of which underpin dominant conceptualizations of tourism. The significance of the banal in tourism has been systematically overlooked by dominant perspectives which have privileged the exotic and the spectacular. There has been little interest and respect for the banal practices and



pleasures of ordinary tourist. In downplaying the banal, dominant perspectives have reproduced a social hierarchy of travellers and tourists, thus sanctioning a set of ideological and social distinctions that is as much a stake in class distinction than an actual description of tourist practices. As Franklin and Crang point out ‘too often we risk treating the numerous and enumerated tourists as foreign species, “Turistas Vulgaris”, only found in herds, droves, swarms and flocks’ (2001: 8). Mass tourism might be a ‘depthless’ and a fluid phenomenon with few meanings and utopias attached but still is a site of relevant social and cultural practices that speak mainly to the body and the sentient. A cultural perspective on mass Mediterranean tourism demands reflexion on these elements, including the ordinary experiences of the package tour, the proliferation of highly commodified environments devoted to leisure, the hedonism of night life in Eivissa and Falaraki and the corporeality of sunbathing, among others.

How to make sense of the banal in tourism is one of the main concerns of this book. Drawing on the Frankfurt School some scholars prefer to proclaim the insubstantiality of the banal spaces of late capitalism, emphasizing their impoverishing effects on social life. Others working within the theoretical framework of identity politics prefer the celebration of the banal as a site of political resistance, taking it as a symbolic expression of the more disadvantage sectors of society. As Meghan Morris noted twenty years ago ‘banality’ serves as a mythic signifier that has all too easily served as a mask for the question of value, and of ‘discrimination’ (Morris 1988: 27). Instead, the route this edited collection follows emphasizes the multiple moods and mutations of the practical, the ordinary and the everyday, that is the banal (Billig 1995). Tourism is part of a ‘banal seduction’ then, not some Baudrillardian ‘fatal shore’ of catastrophic cultural negation, but the ongoing enchantment yet circumscription of life. We start from Haldrup’s, ‘banalizing tourism’, where the times-spaces of tourism and the everyday permeate each other, but this book goes further in calling attention to the banal itself as being the ways tourist practices produce and reproduce social life and materialize structures of feeling and moral dilemmas. We suggest it is ‘enabling’ for tourist studies and not merely ‘something that is left behind after it has been exorcized or redeemed in the movements of cultural analysis’ (Seigworth 2000: 229). Tourism does not need to be recovered from banality, either

by finding the exceptional within it nor by finding its normality exceptional. Banal desire is grounds for neither condemning tourism as beyond redemption nor redeeming some putative resistance – it is instead the medium of tourism. Thus paying attention to it is to heed what Michel de Certeau called ‘the oceanic rumble of the ordinary’ and where

the task consists not in substituting a representation for the ordinary or covering it up with mere words, but in showing how it introduces itself into our techniques – in the way in which the sea flows back into pockets and crevices in beaches – and how it can reorganize the place from which discourse is produced (de Certeau 1984: 5)

This collection thus faces the difficulty of much work on mass culture in avoiding ventriloquizing the ordinary, or creating some monolithic, undifferentiated everyday sense that is the same for everyone and applicable to no one, or romanticizing the popular to invest the study with glow of resistance. With different degrees of intensity the contributors to this book seek to address this by dislocating attention away from symbolic meanings and discourses to the actual everyday doings and enactments of tourists and their role in the production of social meanings and knowledges. Turning attention towards embodied social performances opens the possibility to acknowledge the significance of the banal in tourism and escape the conceptual straightjacket that has prevented social sciences making sense of the mass tourism.

The route we follow involves recovering a sense of culture beyond traditional elitist or exotic forms to include the ordinary experiences of common people, but without setting those terms as defining each other. It also involves the stretching of culture beyond the rational and the visible to include the everyday invisible elements that make up social life, the lay and popular knowledges, the habits, skills and conventions as well as the unreflexive practices. Culture here is not a fixed, finished product but a historically specific formation that has to be continuously enacted. As Edensor (2001) explains, tourism is a mundane system of practice and performance, a highly regulated and choreographed space as well as a realm of improvisation and contestation. In developing a pragmatic sense of mass tourism, this approach is careful not to reproduce social distinctions between travel and tourism, seeking instead to ‘come to terms with the continual oscillation around the poles of traveller

and tourist' (Franklin and Crang 2001: 8). Rather than bringing together all sorts of travel within a single hierarchy, this approach seeks to reconstruct the heterogeneous histories and trajectories of tourism. An emphasis on the ordinary and the everyday requires a higher attention to the diversity of practices in tourism.

It would be wrong to assume – as many scholars implicitly do – the innocence and simplicity of banal tourist practices. As Billig explains, 'banal does not mean benign' (1995: 4). Still marked with meaning, banal forms of tourism have proved to be an effective vehicle for the (re)production of social and cultural formations, making them look normal and ordinary while placing them out of public scrutiny. Mediterranean tourism has played an important geopolitical and ideological role (Pack 2006); however the political and cultural significance of mass tourism is first and foremost at the level of the body and the sentient. The Mediterranean is a major cultural laboratory for the production of bodies, feelings and subjectivities in Western Europe. The most critical role mass tourism has played relates the formation of postmodern consumer sensibilities. The notion of biopolitics (Foucault 1978) provides a useful framework to re-position mass tourism in relation to contemporary cultural processes. Mass tourism is a prominent example of a new form of biopolitical circulation that consolidates in Western Europe after the Second World War with the emergence of post-industrial globalized economies increasingly reliant on leisure and consumption (Vilarós 2005). Drawing on Foucault, bio-politics is understood here as the 'Extensive complex of discourses, practices and institutions tasked with the care, regulation, and improvement of individual bodies and of the collective body of national population' (Vasudevan, 2006: 800). This new form of bio-political circulation is more interested in the production of life than the power over life. Mass tourism emerges in a transitional context from primary systems of power based on technologies of repression towards a much more vitalist and creative political systems which pursue the incorporation of citizens within a new order of hedonism and consumption. Mass tourism points to the importance of play (Huizinga 1998), the carnivalesque and grotesque (Bakhtin 1984) in contemporary culture. If the celebration of *homo ludens* is one part of a globalized hedonism, then mass tourism has also long played upon the

body beautiful and the bodily grotesque in such things as the British tradition of sexualized yet ironic seaside postcards (Löfgren 1985).

The carnivalesque also points us to the phenomena of the crowd, the golden horde of Turner and Ash – whose numerousness and density challenges notions of romantic contemplation. Le Bon (1895/2002) figured the twentieth century as the age of the crowd, and one where the crowd were the barbarians breaking down social orders. A more vitalist approach renews our attention to the sociality of crowds, as more than individual actors but ones where writers like Gabriel Tarde emphasized the plastic qualities of individuation and the trans-subjective dimensions of experience. The crowd for him is a mix of spontaneity and somnambulism. This is a tradition that has been eclipsed by later sociological studies that have tended to focus upon the aggregation of individuals rather than the emergent properties of spontaneous generation of imitation (Borch 2006). This surely gives us a sense of the creative regulation of the sociality of a destination like Benidorm. Here we might see the emergence of Bacchanalian partying in ‘a space that has become the most effective substitute for the time of the breaking-up party, that countryside festival that industrialization eliminated from the calendar of Europeans’(MVRDV 2000: 105). Not only are the beaches densely populated but tourists spend almost as long wandering the streets (up 3.25 hrs per day in town, 3.5 hrs on the beach) so that ‘tourists surveyed in Benidorm are notable for their passion for the streets... incited by its charms, which they find unending, moved by surprise, encouraged by the possibility of meeting and recognizing and urged on by the fleeting nature of their stays ’(MVRDV 2000: 112). This is a biopolitics of density and proximity producing an affective charge. In short we need to take seriously the emotional productivity of the mass in mass tourism and to actually think about how a ‘mass’ functions.

Although very few scholars with an interest in tourism turn to the concept of bio-politics, a concern for the production and regulation of bodies, affects and subjectivities is major theme in cultural accounts of Mediterranean tourism. In a path breaking history of the holidays, Inglis (2000) emphasizes the role of the Mediterranean in the creation of new kind of feelings. Carter’s (2007) original cultural account of sunlight also identifies the Mediterranean as one of the main stages in the

constitution of the contemporary, sometimes problematic relationship with the sun. Similar logics can be found in the history of vacationing of Löfgren (1999), the work of Urbain (2003) on the beach, or in MVRDV's analysis of the new urban landscapes emerging in the Iberian coast, where they see a linear city ringing Iberia with a 'wall of banality' (MVRDV 2000: 75). Despite their differences all of these accounts point to the significance of banal spaces and practices of mass tourism in the production of new postmodern forms of life. The contributors to this book also share the belief that mass *banal* tourism is not a social and cultural desert. The banal is central to most chapters of the book: Minca and Borghi explore the translation of a new Orientalist images of Moroccan into a series of mundane tourist practices and landscape aesthetics; Haldrup looks at the significance of tourism as a banal form of experiencing orientalism and cosmopolitanism; Obrador-Pons develops insights into the mundane ways spaces of hospitality are inhabited and Caletrio emphasizes the quotidian and domestic rituals of tourist life in Costa Blanca. Ultimately this book emphasize the need of a more creative approach to mass tourism that neither celebrates nor dismisses the '*banal*', the '*corporeal*' and the '*vulgar*'; an approach that focuses on the productive effects of mass tourism rather than in its ideological underpinnings. It is an approach that sees tourism as an abstract machine rather than an abstract rationality (Guattari 1992). A machine that combines economic, technological, symbolic, emotive and bodily registers to produce and regulate spaces, affects and practices.

### **The times and spaces of mass tourism**

If mass tourism is seen as being tainted by the banal then it is in turn seen as degrading and defiling the places with which it comes into contact. This vision is neatly summed up by Guy Debord in his *Society of the Spectacle*

Capitalist production has unified space, which is no longer bounded by external societies. This unification is at the same time an extensive and intensive process of *banalization*. The accumulation of commodities produced in mass for the abstract space of the market, which had ... destroy the autonomy and quality of places. (Debord 1973:165)

Here then the banal becomes linked with the erosion of authentic place, and tourism becomes the little personification of commodification:

Tourism, human circulation considered as consumption, a by-product of the circulation of commodities, is fundamentally nothing more than the leisure of going to see what has become banal. The economic organization of visits to different places is already in itself the guarantee of their equivalence. The same modernization that removed time from the voyage also removed from it the reality of space. (Debord 1973: 168)

This powerful denunciation looks at tourism as producing a form of space but an abstract one of equivalences. Mass tourism is often offered as the example par excellence of what Augé (1995) calls non-place, with its lack of local references in resorts, beyond the usual suspects of sangria and paella, or ouzo and moussaka. Debord's hyperbolic vision has echoes in many tourism studies that rely not only on the problematic sense of banality but also take for granted an organic notion of authentic place. Organicist perspectives on place draw on a nostalgic vision of a stable and harmonious rural locale, in which there is a coincidence between place and community and between dwelling and sedentarism. What gives a place its specificity and identity is endurance, self-containment and inward-looking history. In this approach proximity and isolation make places whereas mobility and diversity threatens their existence. Stable rural communities based on face-to-face relationships tend to be identified as genuine and authentic whereas the urban, mobile and fragmentary life of modernity tends to be seen as alienating and destructive. This opposition between organic communities and the world of flows of globalization and tourism has been reworked through a number of binaries such as local versus global, authenticity versus commodification, traditional versus modernity and indeed cultural versus economic (Crang, 2006: 55). These binary oppositions inevitably feed back into policy analysis, with a common distinction between good and bad tourism, the latter of course is always mass tourism. The tendency to define tourist places as bounded and enclosed has been denounced in recent years (Crang 2006, Minca and Oakes 2006). As Crang points out tourist studies 'produce an oddly fixed version of the world for a mobile and fluid process' (2006: 48). The main problem with linking authentic dwelling and fixity is that there is no possibility of authenticity and dwelling in the hypermobile spaces of mass tourism, which instead become the repository of all sorts of spatial illnesses including commodification, displacement and alienation.

We believe an ontological shift in the study of mass tourism is necessary that takes into account the different mobilities underpinning this tourist phenomenon. If we are to demonstrate the cultural significance of mass tourism, we need to mobilize both tourists and places in our analysis, breaking with theoretical perspectives that deny the possibility of dwelling-in-mobilities, that is, that deny the place making capacity of fluid social formations such as mass tourism. We are not suggesting abandoning place in favour of movement but reconceptualizing place so that it incorporates the possibility of movement and displacement rather than seeing them as antithetical terms. Tourism places are constituted through many forms of mobilizations and demobilizations among people (both tourists, workers and 'locals'), images and things, at different scales and speeds, where some mobilities are predicated on restricting others, and senses of relative fixity and transience, and some people and things are remobilized in new ways (Sheller 2004: 15, Crang 2009). In other words, these more or less transient phenomena come together in conjunctions that create the tourist landscape. The study of mass tourism needs to embrace a relational approach to place (Massey 2005). Places are not fixed and stable entities but they are provisional and always in the process of construction. Their shape depends on the performances and interactions of the people that inhabit them and the networks that sustain them. As Urry and Sheller point out 'Places are about relationships, about the placing of peoples, materials, images and the systems of difference they perform' (2004: 6). The extraordinary fluidity of contemporary mass tourism is generative of unique spatialities (and temporalities), which are central to the constitution of postmodern subjectivities.

Mass tourism is no longer confined simply to the spatiality of the resort nor to the rhythms of the fortnight vacation, in either its operations or its effects. Even exceptional tourist locales such as Magaluf and Benidorm are shot through with banal connections to the rest of life. Multiple unrelated geographies and temporalities intervene in the constitution of this tourist phenomenon, in a continuous game of circulation and emplacement, of deterritorialization and re-territorialization. Mass tourism may come to light in the beaches of Benidorm, but it is already present in the cold dark winter days of the industrial cities of Germany and the United Kingdom to which it will return when the summer is over in the form of postcards or Ibiza Mix compilations of techno music. It is precisely this

capacity of going back and forth and passing through and dwelling in between that confers uniqueness to the objects and spaces of mass tourism. Paraphrasing Crang, mass tourism ‘aims to produce (...) a sense of being somewhere different and specific, but it does so through a number of constitutive absences’ (2006: 63). We need to destabilize our objects of study from the destination and resort, that comprise so much tourism analysis. Being a tourist is not a solid and permanent state of mind, but a temporary subjectivity that is fragile and elusive. It is a rhythmical phenomenon that appears and disappears. In the summer months the Mediterranean beaches may be full of bodies but a few months later there are only ghostly reminders of them – traces of bodies on beaches and of beaches on bodies. Very few pieces of work have been able to capture this sense of dislocation and fluidity. Moreover highlighting the fluid nature of doing tourism destabilizes the tired opposition of mass tourist and niche tourist, as cultural tourists use mass facilities, as weekend breaks become commonplace over greater distance, when tourists become residents or locals become returning émigrés. These ambiguities are highlighted in the work of Karen O'Reilly on the Costa del Sol (2000) which she develops in this book (chapter seven). Michael Haldrup in chapter three develops a similar strategy, that dislocates the objects of study. This book does not look then at the impact of tourist globalization on local cultures but the emergence of new transnational cultures which involve different levels of presence and absence, local and global relations for all.

As well as rescaling tourism, taking into account the different mobilities and displacements that constitute it, it is also necessary to situate this tourist phenomenon within specific historical and social contexts. It is commonly believed that mass tourism is an external phenomena imposed by the forces of globalization that bares no relation with the identity of the Mediterranean, a manifestation of the economic and social dependency of the south in relation to the north. We would like to move away from that. Blaming the dark (and foreign) forces of capitalism for the series of disasters associated with mass tourism is too easy and omits to think about the specific role and agencies within the Mediterranean that helped shape tourist development. It is necessary to develop historical and sociological accounts that explore the actual workings of mass tourism so that we can get a sense of the diversity and multiplicity of this tourist phenomenon.



In recent years a number of monographs have appeared, although not always in English language, that unpack the varying historical and geographical contexts for mass tourism. While often responding to local interests, these lines of research have the potential to shed light on the workings of mass tourism more generally. For instance the specifics of the Balearic Islands are explored in a series of works by Joan-Carles Cirer on Eivissa and Joan Amer on Mallorca, both in Catalan, which add to an existing literature that also includes the edited collection of La Caixa Foundation (2000) and the work of Rozenberg (1990). Instead of presenting tourism as an immutable, extra-historical development imported from the north, these accounts show mass tourism as a contested field, the shape of which is always provisional and constantly re-negotiated. While taking different perspectives, readings this monographs we get a sense that mass tourism is less homogeneous and straight forward than we thought. We also get a sense mass tourism is not so much an example of cultural and social dependency as the Mediterranean route to Modernity. We hope that comparative histories as well as transnational accounts can emerge that look beyond case studies to follow the different links, routes and flows of mass tourism.

### **Doing the Med, imagining the Med**

If mass tourism produces times, spaces and bodies it also produces knowledge – though not of the kind of knowledge generally recognized in academic accounts. Tourism is now one of the common frames for seeing and sensing the world with its own toolkit of technologies, techniques and aesthetic sensibilities for accessing the world and positioning ourselves in it (Franklin and Crang 2001: 8). Mass tourism is a major medium through which millions of Europeans have been able to know, experience and imagine the vast and fluid space of the Mediterranean. Chapters in this volume thus look at how mass tourism is framing Mediterranean space, by creating sacralized sites, by scripting places with different and often conflicting cultural narratives, re-ordering and reinterpreting a region divided through political and religious lines. Many of these framings draw upon discourses of orientalism, which as Minca, Borghi and Haldrup show later in the book still subtend tourist practices and

expectations of places such as Egypt and Morocco. The Mediterranean is often located and framed at the edge of Europe and if not part of the exotic orient at least half way to it. There is however no single tourist framing of the Mediterranean. Different *vacationscapes*, as Löfgren (1999) call them, coexist, each of them with its own collective images, fantasies and everyday practices and routines, framing and scripting the Mediterranean differently, as a place to encounter civilization and as a place to get away from civilization. The differential scripts and imaginaries, freighted with historical legacies, that sustain new power relations and define place identities are not simply homogenized in mass tourism.

As well as a way of accessing the world, mass tourism is a way of producing meaning about the self. The majority of tourists go to the Mediterranean in search of a sunny place near the sea to relax and get away from it all. Not to find themselves in the popular sense, but certainly to produce a tourist subject that is transformed into a relaxed and liberated agent, and indeed to experience tourism as the demands to relax and enjoy. In focusing on the processes of becoming tourists, this book is moving away from individualist and instrumentalist conceptualization of subjectivity. What is important for us it is not to understand the tourist subject but rather the always-relation practices of subjectification (Thrift 1997). Human agency is a relational effect generated by a decentred network of heterogeneous, interacting components. The chapters of this book look at the Mediterranean as a space for and tourism as a technology of the transient re-definition and multiplication of the self. The most extreme cases of transformation are linked to party destinations such as Eivissa and Falaraky, where people travel to take part in round the clock dance parties and loose themselves in the alcohol, the music and the drugs. Dan Knox in chapter eight develops insights into the cases of Faliraki in Greece and Ayia Napa in Cyprus. In these two cases the Mediterranean emerges as a site where tourists can explore the limits of hedonism and experiment with novel ways of transformation of the self and the body. Nevertheless cases

like these are rather exceptional, the continuous de-composition and re-composition of the self that characterize mass tourism is more often modest and mundane. For many tourists, coastal holidays are a travel-inward to the world of the family as much as a voyage away. Being together and reinforcing family bonds are the basic ambitions of many Mediterranean holidays – an arena for ‘doing family’ that both demands and produces a variety of familial performances. In this case the Mediterranean emerges as ‘theatre of life’ in which tourists can cultivate new aspects of their familial and personal identities. Performing a united family and becoming a child again are some of the pleasures and pressures of mass tourism. The significance of the family is event in tourist photography, which tend to evokes a happy stable and united family (Haldrup and Larsen 2003, Crang 1999).

In looking at the production of knowledge in mass tourism, it is not our intention to make yet another study of the tourist representations, but to develop insights into the tourist process of signification. A sense of mass tourism as a practice is therefore central to this book. This collection develops approaches to mass tourism which are sensitive to social practices and embodied performances. We are interested in the doing of the Mediterranean as much as in its imagining. Mass tourism takes shape and gains expression in shared experiences, everyday routines, fleeting encounters, embodied movements, practical skills, collective dreams and sensuous dispositions. It is a social accomplishment, which has to be learned practiced and developed, which enrolls a variety of material elements in various places (from pre-holiday tanning parlours, to shopping trips to rituals of beach behaviour). In developing a sense of mass tourism as open practice we are not proposing the elimination of representations, meanings or any sort of symbolic activity form the study of mass tourism, but their integration within a single world, which is both open and pragmatic. There is a need to develop a broader scope of mass tourism that integrates practices and fantasies, objects and dreams, moving simultaneously in a material and utopia terrain. As Crang points out, ‘it is not about what representations *show* so much as what they *do*’ (2006: 48). Even in those environments surrounded by the fleeting, subjects are actively engaging with the world in a creative and productive manner. Reframing mass tourism as creative, embodied and performative, this collection takes on the

challenge of reintroducing a sense of sensuality and enjoyment to the costal resort, thus re-enlivening a set of tourist geographies which are often left bare by the rush to produce theoretical order and economic diagnoses. This book explores a number of articulations of practice and subjectivity tied to mass tourism, including those related with photography, the coastal hotel and nightlife. It illustrates how practices of tourism bleed back into 'everyday life', and how time in the Mediterranean relates to technologies of the self, imaginations and cultural understandings.

The heterogeneous practices of tourism are made possible by complex materialities through many networks, connections and disconnections. Tourist practices and subjectivities are the product of complex interactions of human and non-human agencies. Tourists are integrated in assemblages, of things, technologies and places. There are multiple interdependencies between mass tourism, architecture and different technologies unfolded in our lives, including technologies of representations. Chapters will explore these complex interdependencies, thus demonstrating how tourists are constantly attending the material world, looking using, buying and even making things with their hands.

### **Outline of the book**

This edited collection offers a series of insights into some of the key sites of mass Mediterranean tourism. It contains nine chapters covering Morocco, Egypt, Turkey, Cyprus, Greece and Spain as well as the intersection between northern Europe and the Mediterranean. The book is organized thematically as well as geographically. The early chapters focus on the southern shore, bringing in the colonial and exotic legacies underpinning Mediterranean tourism. The later chapters are concerned with the more hedonistic forms of mass tourism which are predominant in the northern shore. The intersection of the material with the representational and the performative is a major concern in all the contributions. However the early chapters place more emphasis on the complex visualizations and imaginary of the Mediterranean, whereas the later chapters switch the focus to social practices and embodied performances. All chapters report from recent and ongoing field research in the Mediterranean offering up to the minute material and are engaged with the critical interpretation of tourism. The book starts with an introductory chapter that makes a critical review of social and

geographies research on mass Mediterranean tourism, identifying neglected areas of inquiry as well as emerging research agenda.

The first two chapters of the book reflect on the more ‘cultural’ and ‘exotic’ dimension of Mediterranean tourism. In chapter two Minca and Borghi look at the new forms of mass cultural tourism that are rapidly transforming Morocco into a key cultural destination in the Mediterranean. The cultural shift of Morocco tourism is based on the re-staging of the colonial for the masses and the promotion of Morocco as a secure and easy-to-reach exoticism. The process is part of a strategic vision of rapid growth that proposes the rewriting of Morocco imaginary through an orientalist eye, refashioning the tourism geographies inaugurated by the colonial French. Minca and Borghi focus on the tourist colonization of Marrakech Medina. They unpack the translation of its orientalist image into a new landscape aesthetics and a series of mundane practices. By highlighting the distance between the exotic aura of tourism promotion and the banality of many tourism practices, the chapter deflects usual criticism aimed at mass cultural tourism for its reliance on false and static tropes. When translating orientalist discourses into mundane practices, stereotyped representations and performances of colonial aesthetics are challenged and even disrupted.

The ambivalence between cosmopolitanism and orientalism in contemporary tourism is the main theme of Michael Haldrup’s chapter three. The chapter examines the significance of tourism as a mundane form of experience of the global and the other, drawing on ethnographic research on Danish tourists visiting Egypt. Haldrup emphasizes the importance of mundane banalities for the study of tourist performances. Bringing together the exotic and the familiar, the chapter explores the multiple ways tourist performances feed into everyday life of people. Instead of ‘banalizing’ tourism, Haldrup calls attention to the banal ways tourist practices and experiences implicated in emergence of contemporary cultures of banal cosmopolitanism and orientalism. The chapter also emphasizes the need to trace out the routes that connect the context of home and away. Tourism is a culture of circulation that cannot be easily contained and localized. By discriminating between three different modes of banal cosmopolitanism Haldrup points towards the significance of less reflexive and more embodied responses to the penetration of everyday life by global mobilities.

The following chapter, which takes us to the Greek Island of Kefalonia, the setting of a book and film of Capitan Corelli's *Mandolin*, develops a case study of middlebrow popular tourism in the Mediterranean. Crang and Travlou's chapter four unpack the production and enactment of tourist imaginary in the island, drawing attention the intersection between tourism, film and literature. The chapter explores how the film and the book have refigured the tourist image of the island by replaying the myth of the Edenic Beach as well as ongoing discourses of Greekness and Mediterraneanness. The movie and book of Captain Corelli wrap the island in a romantic imaginary, which is part of the currency through which the tourist appeal of the island is constructed over and against the implied carnivalesque hedonism of other destinations. The chapter also explores how this imaginary is played out in practices of tourist consumption on different beaches. In making such connections between tourist imaginaries and practices, the absences are as revealing as the presences. Captain Corelli can hardly be missed and yet it is also curiously hard to actually find it. Captain Corelli is a phantasm in the island. Its substantiality is diffuse and yet undeniably present.

Chapter five is the first to reflect on 'sun, sea and sand' forms of mass tourism. In this chapter Pau Obrador examines the coastal hotel, one of the most basic institutions of mass tourism in the Mediterranean. The chapter reflects on the nature of social relations in the highly commodified and fleeting environments of mass tourism drawing attention to the everyday relations and practices through which this space is inhabited by tourists. Obrador considers the coastal hotel in terms of hospitality and affect, opening up mass tourism to new ways of thinking the social that are less hostile to this tourist phenomenon. An ethnographic account of two hotel pools in the island of Menorca explores the various elements that make up the social fabric of the pool including conviviality, domesticity, hostility and the gaze. The discussion brings to the fore the complexity and liveliness of the social life of the pool. By the pool light touch forms of sociality coexist with more enduring social forms that combine an ideological and affectual dimension.

The cultural geographies of 'sun sea and sand' in the Mediterranean are highly diverse incorporating a myriad of configurations, some of which remain largely unacknowledged. In chapter six, Javier Caletrio examines one of the alternative geographies of mass tourism and the beach that

coexist along with the more visible landscapes of the package tour. This alternative tourist geography of the Mediterranean is a largely domestic phenomenon that centres on the figure of *veraneante* translating as ‘those who regularly spend the holiday there’. Focusing on the Costa Blanca in Spain, the chapter highlights the significance of the familiar in the creation of the Mediterranean landscape. It is a form of vacationing that centres on the re-encounter of place and people and where meeting significant others is critical. It is an enduring tourism geography punctuated by quotidian rituals, ways of encountering that have to be learned. The chapter also emphasizes the embodied and material ways in which geographies and landscapes are mobilized. For the *veraneante* the sense of familiarity and intimacy stems from a practical engagement with the sensualities of the beach and the seaside in company of others. The beach of the *veraneante* is a landscape of memory, heavy with time that speaks of an investment in a sense of place.

The extraordinary development of mass tourism in places like the Costa del Sol has led to new touristic mobilities with international visitors also becoming more sedentary. Residential tourism, which Karen O’Reilly examines in chapter seven, is one of the most significant of them. A series of contradictions characterize these transnational communities settling in the Costa del Sol. Residential tourism entails a subtle and continuous balancing act between residence and tourism, home and away, utopia and reality, which has to be managed, practiced and performed on a daily basis, specially through the act of being both host and guest. O’Reilly regards these contradictions essential to the lives of residential tourists enabling them to live their lives as a permanent escape. Their lifestyle works as long as participants remain in but not in, home but no home neither here nor there. O’Reilly incorporates materiality in her cultural account of the phenomenon examining the material cultures that are woven into the everyday life of British residents in Spain and their co-creation through transformation and performance.

Chapter eight develops insights into the more hedonistic side of mass tourism. Drawing on participant observation in the resorts of Faliraki in Greece and Ayia Napa in Cyprus, Dan Knox

examines the often vilified mass youth tourism, making a plea for deeper and more nuanced understanding of the phenomenon. He looks at both the signifying practices of those participating in clubbing holiday and the representations of such holidays and how the circulation of those representations fuels the continued consumption of youth tourism products. The chapter is primarily concerned with the relationship between mass tourism and the everyday. Knox argues that youth tourism is not so much a break from general life experiences as a period of increased activity, a spectacular manifestation of the everyday. Representations consumed in advanced such as media performances and club soundtracks heighten a sense of expectation while providing the necessary knowledge to become insiders of the scene. An inflection of Bourdieu's account of cultural capital to become subcultural capital is central to the chapter. Like more sophisticated forms of tourism, youth tourism is also a way of gathering valuable experience that has value within particular social field.

The book finishes with a commentary on the Mediterranean on the age of mass tourism, following the spirit of French historian Fernand Braudel. This commentary emphasizes the significance of mass tourism in shaping and reshaping the region. Mass tourism has become the very fabric of the Mediterranean, conferring to the region a new economic and social centrality. It is the Mediterranean route to post-modernity.

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